

# Effects of solar wind conditions on the plasma wake within a polar crater: preliminary results

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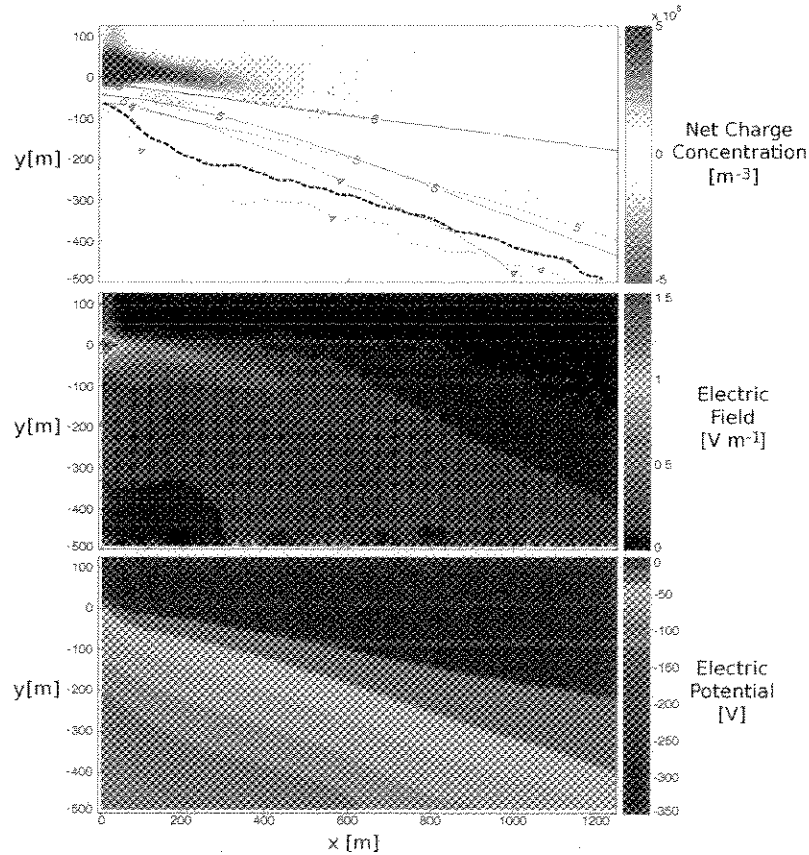
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**Abstract.** As the solar wind sweeps horizontally past a shadowed lunar crater it simultaneously diffuses toward the surface through an ambipolar process, forming a plasma wake (e.g., Figure 1). Importantly, the resulting electric field structure diverts solar wind protons toward the cold crater floor where they may represent a source of surficial hydrogen. We present a handful of two-dimensional kinetic simulations exploring the range of wake structures and surface particle fluxes possible under various background plasma conditions.



**Figure 1:** Simulated lunar crater wake under typical solar wind conditions for a 500 m deep step-like crater. (Top) Net charge concentration [colored lines represent  $\log_{10}(\text{concentration})$  for the respective species; black dashed line is the height at which the Debye length is half the crater depth]. (Mid.) Electric field. (Bot.) Electric potential.